

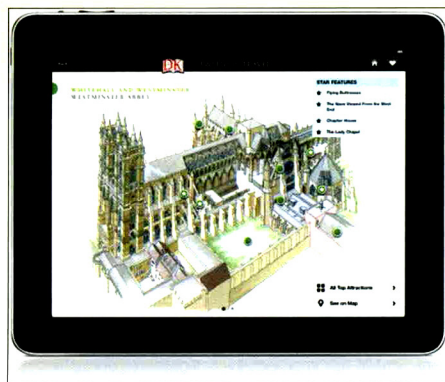
INFOTECH

Nurturing a New Breed of Reader Five Real-World Issues

Annette Lamb and Larry Johnson

Google grazers, iPad advocates, and e-book evangelists.... Ask a group of young people their preferred reading tool and you'll hear a wide range of answers.

Technology, both inside and outside the school library, is changing the way children read, as well as our approach to teaching. While some children are browsing books about cities of the world, others are skimming reference books on the Kindle reader, and yet another group may be using the DK Eyewitness Travel Apps (travel.dk.com/apps/ew-cities) on the iPad to explore famous sites like Westminster Abbey. They're all reading. However, each tool provides a different set of experiences.



DK Eyewitness Travel App for iPad

In her article "Digital Literacies," Lotta Larson (2009, p. 255) points out that today's readers are "immersed in multimodal experiences and, consequently, have a keen awareness of the possibility of combining modes and media to receive and communicate messages. This awareness results in an urgent need for teachers and researchers to address the discrepancy between the types of literacy experiences students encounter at school (paper, pencil, and print texts), and those they practice in their daily lives outside the school environment (Web 2.0). One way to bridge such incongruity is to expand the types of texts students are exposed to and engaged with at school by turning attention to electronic books, or e-books."

Barry Cull's (2011) article, "Reading Revolutions," concludes that librarians need to provide access to both digital and traditional texts, along with providing appropriate spaces for deep-reading activities.

What does this mean for school libraries and this new breed of reader?

Let's explore five real-world issues for today's school library media centers, including devices, resources, skills, attitudes, and approaches.

1 - THE DEVICES

This new breed of reader feels comfortable working with many kinds of devices, and our school libraries are increasingly filled with tools that serve a variety of purposes. Look around your library. You might see ...

- ... high school teens reading for leisure on Nooks.
- ... an ESL student listening to a book on an MP3 player.
- ... a group of students checking out a laptop from the library, so they can create an interactive poster in Glogster.
- ... a student working to a dictionary on a Kindle.
- ... a middle school student playing a vocabulary game on an iPod touch and sharing results with teammates on the class network.
- ... a group of students sitting in front of a large monitor editing a public service announcement video for their health class.
- ... an elementary teacher working with a reading group on an electronic whiteboard, while another group of young children is reading independently on their iPads.

It's easy to purchase the "coolest" tools, but the key to reading success is matching technology with quality content to meet specific learning needs. For instance, an iPod touch or iPad containing field guide apps such as iBird Explorer (ibird.com), Star Walk (vitotechnology.com), and MyNature Guides (mynatureapps.com) provides a wonderful environment for outdoor science explorations.

Before buying devices, consider the following:

Network Capabilities. How can information be shared using this device? Can it easily be connected to the Internet, local area network, or peer devices? Can information be projected on a large screen or sent to a printer? Is the ability to link to other devices or share information important?

Media Access. What type of media is accessible on this device? Does the device have an easy-to-read screen? Can the display be



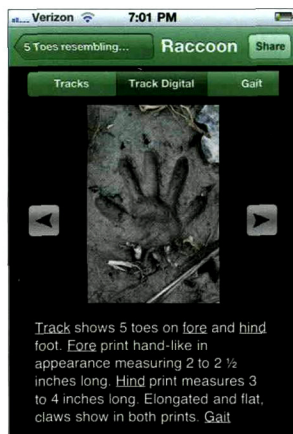
GRAPHIC NOVELS

LATIN AMERICAN GEMS

Mr. Mendoza's Paintbrush. Luis Alberto Urrea and Christopher Cardinale. Cinco Puntos Press, 2010. \$16.95. 978-1-933693-23-1. Grades 7 and up. Mr. Mendoza doesn't believe in graffiti. He believes in public art, distributed on the blank walls of small-town Rosario, art in the form of biting witticisms and poignant phrases that call the arrogant by their true names. The cross-hatching, backgrounds, and even panel borders are meticulously rough in this oversized comic, but the characters and themes run together like thick, patient paint.

Cuba: My Revolution. Iverna Lockpez and Dean Haspiel. DC Comics, 2010. \$24.99. 978-1-4012-2217-8. Grades 9 and up. Sonya is only a teenager when Fidel rides to power on the back of popular sentiment and a strong message of democracy. Swept up in the potential for civic change, she gives up her dreams of being an artist and enters medical training—anything to help the Cuba that is about to be born. In this haunting story, Sonya grows up trying to retain faith in her government and the people around her, even when both betray her repeatedly. The spare use of red in different hues throughout the book shows a remarkable flexibility, matching the story's wide emotional range.

De:Tales. Fábio Moon and Gabriel Bá. Dark Horse, 2010. \$19.99. 978-1-59582-557-5. Grades 9 and up. This collection of short stories is a showcase for powerful comics that are both experimental and bursting with life. Longing, fear, self-loathing, and a very delicate love—all of these shine through the pages of this eclectic and genuinely satisfying collection.



MyNature Track Guide for iPad

adjusted to meet individual vision needs? Is color available for images or enhanced text? Can the device be used to access audio, video, and animation?

Technical Aspect. Is the device intuitive and easy to navigate? Will batteries, specialty cables, or accessories inhibit use?

Content. Can the device be used to access quality reading and instructional ma-

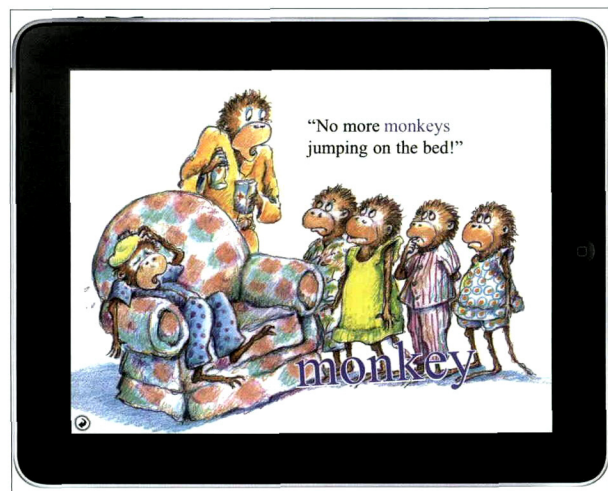
terials? Are enough materials available to make purchase of the device cost-effective? Are on-going subscriptions or software purchases necessary? What are the licensing issues related to content for the device?

Portability. How easily can this device be checked out or used in a variety of locations? Is portability important with this device, or are other factors more important, such as a large screen or fast processor?

In some cases, it's necessary to give up some features in favor of others. For instance, the portability of the iPad is great for young children. However, it may be a problem to connect this device to your data projector. Instead, simply point your document camera at the screen for large group demonstrations.

2 - THE RESOURCES

The market for e-books and interactive reading resources has exploded. It's become easy to download books onto e-book readers and other devices. However, it's essential for librarians to consider licensing agreements. Many companies have confusing and sometimes conflicting guidelines for individuals and libraries regarding the use of multiple devices and the simultaneous use of books.



Five Little Monkeys Jumping On the Bed for iPad

YA NONFICTION

**NEW CURRICULUM
TITLES OF INTEREST!**

Calico Dresses and Buffalo Robes: American West Fashions From the 1840s to the 1890s (Dressing a Nation: The History of U.S. Fashion). Katherine Krohn. Twenty-First Century Books, 2012. \$23.95. 978-0-7613-5890-9. Grades 6-12. Ebook edition available. The series presents the historical influences on clothing in America from the 1580s to 1950s. This title features women's dresses, men's rugged wear, "rule breakers," and many of the extras described in photos and side bars. A timeline, glossary, source notes, bibliography and index are included.

Genghis Khan and the Mongol Empire (World History). Don Nardo. Lucent Books, 2011. \$33.95. 978-1-4205-0326-5. Grades 7-10. Readable text, colorful illustrations, and primary source quotes make this a strong addition for world history studies. Detailed source notes add authority.

Medical Marijuana (Current Controversies). Noel Merino, editor. Greenhaven, 2011. \$33.72. 978-0-7377-5424-7. Grades 10-12. Each chapter poses a question—for example, "Should marijuana be a medical option?"—and divides the answers into "Overview," "Yes," "No," with primary sources providing the perspectives. Concluding material lists organizations to contact, bibliography and detailed index.

The Settlement of American: Encyclopedia of Westward Expansion from Jamestown to the Closing of the Frontier. James A. Crutchfield, Candy Moulton, and Terry A. Del Bene, editors. Sharpe Reference, 2011. 2 vols. \$240.00. 978-0-7656-1984-6. Grades 9-12. Sharpe Online Reference available. About 500 signed entries make this two-volume reference tool indispensable for research, offering diverse viewpoints of historical events. Extensive back matter includes a detailed chronology, primary documents, detailed bibliography, and comprehensive index.

SILLY LILLY

AND THE FOUR SEASONS



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Silly Lilly free iPad e-book app.

You're probably aware of Barnes and Noble for Nook (bn.com/nook) books and Amazon for Kindle (amazon.com/kindle) books, but there are other locations to access books for these and other devices.

While some e-books are specific to a particular operating system, others use the open standard EPUB format. These books can be read across most devices. Public domain books such as *The Call of the Wild*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* are available in this format. Websites such as Internet Archive (archive.org) and Project Gutenberg (gutenberg.org) are good places to download free books for e-book readers.

Increasingly, companies are producing interactive books as apps for iPad and other app-based devices. These reading experiences may include enhanced materials such as audio and video, games, and social features for children. Oceanhouse Media (oceanhousemedia.com) produces collections of works including Dr. Seuss, Little Critters, and the Berenstain Bears for iPad. iStoryTime (istorytimeapp.com), DisneyDigital Book (disneybookapps.com), TouchyBooks (touchybooks.com), and Mobistories (mobistories.com) are a few other popular interactive reading app publishers. Some of these publishers provide a sampling of free books. For instance, a series of



Magic School Bus Oceans for iPad

TOON Books (toon-books.com/special.php) by well-known publishers are available as free downloads.

3 - THE SKILLS

Technology is changing the way we read and learn. Young people need to be aware of these changes and how they impact information organization, selection, evaluation, and creation.

Barry Cull (2011) stresses that, "information literacy and advanced reading skills grow through a student's educational career," regardless of the specific information technologies used.

Age Appropriateness. The ability to read linear texts will continue to be the foundation for reading instruction; however, new media requires students to also develop new skills. Many interactive stories based on well-known print materials are designed with specific developmental levels in mind. Adina Shamir and Ofra Korat (2006) stress the importance of evaluating the story's structure, lexicon, syntax, and grammatical complexity based on the age and abilities of the child.

Reading Comprehension. Reading comprehension is a process by which readers construct meaning from text. Prior knowledge and experiences are activated

as the words and visuals are read and new information is assimilated. Researchers have been exploring the impact of interactive reading experiences for decades. By comparing conventional books with interactive books, Jane Medwell (1998) found children reading interactive storybooks were better able to retell the story and did better on comprehension questions. In addition, interactive storybooks improved sight recognition of words in beginning readers (Lewin, 2000).

Deborah Doty, Scott Popplewell, and Gregg Byers (2001) found no significant differences on oral retellings associated with interactive storybooks versus traditional printed books. However, when comprehension was measured through questions, students reading the interactive storybook scored higher. The interactive books provided students with the ability to access definitions. Student could also click on illustrations for labels and pronunciation of words.

In studying electronic texts, Lotta Larson (2008) found that e-texts foster reading comprehension. Increasingly, interactive book publishers are conducting their own research to support e-book use. For instance, Interactive Educational Systems Design, Inc. (2010) reported that presentation of text visually and auditorily contrib-

BEAT BULLYING

MARCH



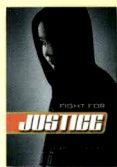
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SuperWhy from PBS Kids mobile app

uted to reading comprehension, particularly among struggling readers. Bi-modal presentation of text was found to support age-appropriate content knowledge. In addition, narration matched to listener's reading rate also contributed to learning.

Interactive Reading. Readers need a framework for dealing with nonlinear and fragmented information sources. Ralf Schneider (2005) argues that today's readers are already exposed to fragmented presentations through storybits in the form of commercials and music videos. Readers simply need to learn how to recognize the structures that exist in a particular type of text. In other words, a short story has a particular structure that readers can distinguish from an expository text. The ability to identify different types of texts and how to deal with them will be increasingly important. The same is true of helping readers to distinguish fact from opinion.

Integral and Incidental Elements. Students must be able to identify the most important information and collect evidence to support their learning need. In addition, they must learn to identify integral and incidental elements of an interactive story. Just as they learn what are the most important components in the narrative, they also need to focus on the key audio, visual, animation, and other elements that

are connected to the text. This begins with interactive storybooks, but continues with complex transmedia adventures. According to Maya Eagleton (2002), "Hypermedia literacy requires the ability to orchestrate and transmediate among traditional literacies and 'new' literacies of visual representation, computers, and hypertext."

Use Scholastic's Apps (scholastic.com/apps) to help students make these distinctions. Many of these apps contain interactive stories, along with factual information, videos, and games. For instance, many of the Magic School Bus resources have been combined for the iPad format.

Focus. In the article "The Lost Art of Reading," David Ulin (2009) discusses how difficult it is to step away from multimedia technology, slow down, and immerse oneself in text. Stressing the flow of linear text, the lack of distractions, and the need to focus, Ulin emphasizes the importance of taking time for deep reading. This type of reading experience can occur when reading a device as well as a traditional book. However, students need skills in self-regulation to manage their use of technology.

It's important to help young people stay focused in both linear and nonlinear environments. Hypertexts can slow reading speed and cause readers to fear they've



lost track of information (Dobon & Miall, 1998).

4 - THE ATTITUDE

Young people enjoy electronic reading. People who read on the Internet tend to be off-computer readers, too (Mokhtari, Reichard, & Gardner, 2009). A 2009 study by the National Endowment for the Arts found that eighty-four percent of adults who read literature online also read books, with the highest levels among young adults.

Wendy Griswold and Nathan Wright (2004) found a positive relationship between reading and Internet use. They stress that the Internet won't displace reading, but instead provides readers with the advantage of information access and social connections.

Stephen Burgess and Kelanie Jones (2010) found that college students who read for pleasure do better academically than those who only read required coursework.

Most students enjoy the e-Book experience. Reading motivation increases as a result of using interactive texts (Glasgow, 1996). Lotta Larson (2009) found that all the students in her e-book study preferred reading e-books over traditional books. They particularly liked the tools for highlighting and note taking. Lucianne Brown (2009) found that using mobile phones for vocabulary activities improved comprehension and increased motivation to learn over traditional non-digitized delivery.

Recent research findings by Mark Taylor shows that teens who read books are more likely to get professional positions later in life. Taylor states, "There is something special about reading for pleasure... that aren't replicated in any other extra-curricular activity" (Taylor, 2011). This provides a strong case for promoting reading for pleasure in school libraries.

5 - THE APPROACHES

Rather than abandoning best practices in favor of new technologies, look for ways to transform traditional approaches. Lotta Larson (2010, p.16) stresses that teachers

must "address the discrepancy between the types of literacy experiences students encounter at school and those they practice in their daily lives outside the school environment." For instance, Larson (2008, p.122) suggests transforming the traditional reading workshop approach into an electronic reading workshop. Larson used Hancock's (2007) four categories to illustrate this shift:

- The literature section would feature e-books and online materials rather than print texts.
- Literature response journals would involve electronic journals and blogs rather than spiral notebooks.
- Literature conversations could be held in threaded discussions online rather than in face-to-face groups.
- Project response options could incorporate technology tools for publishing and multimedia products.

Teacher librarians will have an increasingly important role in helping teachers and students shift from print to non-print reading environments. Not all children have the metacognitive skills needed to work independently. For instance, students can easily miss key story elements or misunderstand words when working independently (McKenna, 1998). Jane Medwell (1996) found that interaction with a teacher, along with an interactive book, had positive effect on pupils' word recognition, and Trushell, Burrell, and Maitland (2001, p. 400) concluded that teacher intervention is important to "ensure moderation in choice of 'eye-candy' and linear progression."

Many learning opportunities are available on mobile devices. A growing number of educational producers are developing applications across the curriculum. These are particularly popular with home-school parents. For instance, iHomeEducator (ihomeeducator.com/) is a company that specializes in educational applications for the iPad. They produce a series of apps called iLive that focus on topics such as science, math, and language arts. Super Why (pbskids.org/mobile) is only one of many PBS Kids learning apps available for the Android, iPad, iPhone, and iPod Touch.

WEB SITES

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FOR EDUCATORS:

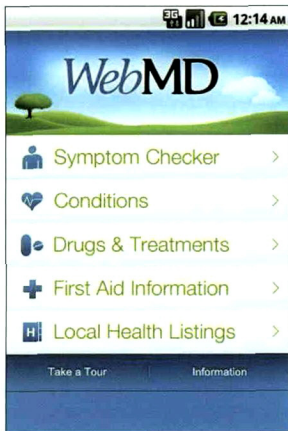
AKO Titanic Trial www.andersonkill.com/titanic/home.htm. Learn about civil trials and juries by holding a mock trial of *Jensen v. White Star Lines*. Facts and witnesses in the case are based on true events.

The Grave of the Titanic <http://octopus.gma.org/space1/titanic.html>. Gulf of Maine Aquarium provides classroom activities from locating the wreck and charting the ship's course, calculating lifeboats, building an unsinkable boat, to depicting the fateful night through art.

Lost Liners www.pbs.org/lostliners. Website from the PBS series "Lost Liners" highlights well-known maritime tragedies of modern times, looks at the evolution of oceanic travel, and introduces Dr. Robert Ballard and his work on underwater exploration. Teacher resources offer a variety of lesson plans from hypothermia to the Blame Game.

National Museum's Northern Ireland: Titanic www.nmni.com/titanic. Titanic was built in Belfast and its national museum documents the ship's fate through audio accounts of survivors and extensive details about its design and life on board. See photos of the sleeping berths of first- through third-class.

RMS Titanic: Ninety-nine years later www.lva.virginia.gov/exhibits/titanic. Using newspaper accounts to examine bias and accuracy in the media, this Library of Virginia exhibit looks at the potential of newspapers for historic and cultural research. Site includes scanned images of editorial cartoons and headlines.



WebMD Mobile

Cathy Pearman and Ching-Wen Chang (2010) note that for beginning readers, supervision is needed to help children ensure attainment of specific skills. They found that the features provided by interactive stories offer important support for the ac-

quisition of reading skills, when partnered with teacher supervision, to monitor use and direct instruction in comprehension skills.

In addition to the traditional role of the teacher as facilitator, instructor, model, and more, Larson and Marsh (2005, p. 73) note that in the "complex, multimodal, electronic worlds," teachers must also be resource managers, co-constructors of knowledge, and design consultants providing advice on texts that meet learning needs. This is particularly important in content-area reading. For instance, students need to be able to use traditional reference resources to access health information. However, they also must be able to use apps such as WebMD Mobile (webmd.com/mobile).

CONCLUSION

From enjoying novels on a Kindle e-book reader to skimming information on an iPad app, reading on a screen has become a part of everyday life for many. Is this new world of reading really going to impact teaching

and learning? Yes! It already has. According to the 2010 Kids & Family Reading Report from Scholastic (2011), children enjoy digital reading. One in four children have read an eBook and over half of children ages 9-17 say they are interested in reading eBooks. More importantly, one third of children say they would read more books for fun, if they had access to eBooks on an electronic device.

This new breed of learner needs access to a wide range of devices as well as quality content-area resources to help them develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes for the 21st century. Traditional books won't go away; they'll just become part of a new mix of reading resources for a new breed of reader.

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